



STATE OF VERMONT

AGENCY OF COMMERCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

February 3, 2005

Victoria Ratson, Chief
Environmental Analysis
AB444 (Sub-No. 1X)
Surface Transportation Board
Section of Environmental Analysis
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**Re: Proposed Abandonment and Discontinuance Exemption, Lamoille Valley Railroad Company Line (1) From Swanton, Vermont to St. Johnsbury, Vermont and (2) Along the Hardwick & Woodbury Connecting Track in Hardwick, Vermont.
Docket No. AB-444 (Sub-No. 1X).**

Dear Ms. Ratson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above project and the inventory of resources over 50 years old along the proposed abandonment mentioned above. Our comments are based on the information contained in the document, "Before the Surface Transportation Board, Washington, D.C., Docket No. AB-444 (Sub-No. 1X), LAMOILLE VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY--ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION--IN CALEDONIA, WASHINGTON, ORLEANS, LAMOILLE AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES, VERMONT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC REPORTS IN COMPLIANCE WITH 49 C.F.R. PART 1105" by James B. Fitzgerald, Lamoille Valley Railroad Company, Vermont Agency of Transportation, Rail Section.

The Division for Historic Preservation has reviewed this proposed undertaking pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4, regulations established by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Project review consists of identifying the project's potential impacts to historic buildings and structures, historic districts, historic landscapes and settings, and to known or potential archeological resources.

Since the state of Vermont is going to continue ownership of the trackage, the Division for Historic Preservation is only commenting on the continuing responsibility for maintenance of historic resources identified in the Environmental and Historic Report, Section 1105.8 mentioned above and the sections of trackage proposed for abandonment that involve property where the Division has had or does have some ownership interest or question. We understand that trackage will remain on large bridges such as the Fisher

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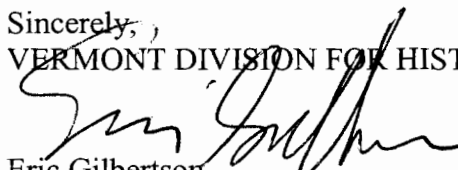
Covered Bridge in Wolcott and we concur with the abandonment of the section of trackage at the western end of the line on land in Swanton that was transferred to the Division for Historic Preservation ca. 1974.

Based on the information submitted to our office, it is our opinion that the proposed project will have no adverse effect to historic resources provided the following conditions are met:

1. Structures associated with the Lamoille Valley Railroad Company Line from Swanton, Vermont to St. Johnsbury, Vermont and along the Hardwick & Woodbury connecting track in Hardwick, Vermont that may be impacted by any work will be evaluated by a 36 CFR 800-qualified architectural historian to determine whether they are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and the Division will be given an opportunity to review and comment on the findings of the architectural historian;
2. Any projects that have the potential to affect historic resources identified during the above evaluation process will be reviewed by a 36 CFR 800-qualified architectural historian to determine the effects of the project on the historic resources and the Division will be given an opportunity to review and comment on the findings of the architectural historian;
3. Structures associated with the Lamoille Valley Railroad Company Line from Swanton, Vermont to St. Johnsbury, Vermont and along the Hardwick & Woodbury connecting track in Hardwick, Vermont identified by the consultant and the Division as being historic will be maintained.

We look forward to reviewing plans for future work on the identified historic structures along the railroad line. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above project. If you have any questions or need clarification regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact Judith Williams Ehrlich, Environmental Review Coordinator, at (802) 828-3049.

Sincerely,
VERMONT DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Eric Gilbertson
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Cc: John Fitzgerald, Lamoille Valley Railroad Company, c/o Vermont Agency of Transportation, Rail Section

April D. Hensel, Linda Matteson and Patrick Dakin, Vermont District Two
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